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TWO NESTS OF BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD

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A HUMMING BIRD'S FAVORITE NESTING PLACE.

F. N. SHANKLAND, WILLOUGHBY, OHIO.

It is a fact well known to all students of birds that many species of hawks, eagles, owls, swallows, wrens and other birds, return to the same nesting place year after year. It is doubtful, however, whether this has ever been found to be true of humming birds. In two cases that have come to my attention, however, humming birds of two different species have returned to the same nesting haunt on successive summers.

The accompanying photo shows two nests of the Black-chinned Hummingbird of California. The upper nest was built one year later than the lower one and contained two eggs at the time it was found. The birds had been seen in the locality the previous summer, but the nest had not been located. A year later, however, their secret was discovered and the nest and eggs collected. There is little doubt but that both nests were made by the same pair of birds. Evidently they liked the nesting place so well that they returned to it the second year. Nor is it improbable that if the nest had been left undisturbed the proprietors might have added a third nest the following year, and even more after that.

The nests shown in the photo were found by J. B. Dixon in Escondido, San Diego County, California, on June 12, 1904. They were located thirty feet high in a live oak tree.

The nests were made of sycamore down without lining. One of the eggs is somewhat larger than the other, which is often the case with sets of humming birds' eggs, and is usually explained on the theory that the smaller egg will hatch into a male bird and the larger one into a female.

Sometime ago I had the good fortune to find a nest of the Ruby-throated Hummingbird on an apple tree branch near my home at Willoughby. The nest contained two fresh eggs. While looking around I noticed a second nest a few feet away, and upon examining it found that it was a last year's one. Both nests had probably been made by the same pair of birds, for aside from the discoloration and weathering of the old nest, the two were identical in size, shape and general appearance. This, coupled with the fact that they were located within a few feet of each other, makes it almost certain that they were built by the same pair of birds.

These are interesting examples of the wonderful instinct which guides even the tiniest of birds over thousands of miles of territory to their favorite summer nesting haunts. In the case of the Black-chinned Hummingbird, however, it is quite possible that the builders of the double nest, owing to the mild climate of Southern California, had never strayed very far away from the place it was found.

A SECOND BIRD SURVEY AT WASHINGTON, D. C.

BY HARRY C. OBERHOLSER.

Our first comprehensive bird census¹ near Washington, D. C., was such a success that we decided to repeat it in the spring of 1917. On this second occasion twenty-two ornithologists took part, and the seventeen parties into which they separated covered pretty thoroughly the various kinds of country within twenty miles of the city. The date selected was May 11, 1917, one day earlier in the month than in 1913; and the choice proved to be a fortunate one, since an unex-

¹ The Wilson Bulletin, XXIX (No. 98), March, 1917, pp. 18-29.